

Sixth Sunday of Easter – Homily – 05/17/2020

How are we living out our Christian vocation as a soldier of Christ?

Sometime, hopefully in the near future, our bishop, a successor of the apostles, will come and lay hands on some of our children to confirm them in the faith.

In the Sacrament of Confirmation they will receive a greater outpouring of the Holy Spirit so that they can more fully live out their Christian vocation as soldiers of Christ.

This is what happened to the people of Samaria after their Baptisms when the Apostles, Peter and John, came to lay hands on them.

Most of us have already received the gift of the Holy Spirit in Confirmation by now.

And yet probably the majority of us have come to realize how difficult it is to fully live out our Christian vocation even with all the help our Lord provides.

Why is this? The answer can be found in today's Gospel.

Jesus promised to send the Spirit of Truth with an important qualification...“whom the world cannot accept...”

As Baptized and Confirmed Christians we still have to live in the world but the world can definitely take its toll on us and move us in the wrong direction.

So it's very important to invite the Holy Spirit into a daily examination of self to see how well we are observing the commandments that Jesus gives us through his Church.

One test is to see how much we suffer for following Christ and His Church like St. Peter referred to in the second reading.

Anyone who has stood up in recent years for the traditional teachings of the Church on marriage, gender identity, contraception and abortion probably knows all too well what it's like to be maligned, defamed and even rejected for holding these beliefs.

But as St. Peter said, it is no doubt better to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.

But like every good soldier, and we are all members of the Church Militant, we will fall in battle from time-to-time.

And it is painful to find ourselves so often on the wrong side of that which the world values.

We can easily become battle weary but as Jesus said in the Gospel, “Whoever has my commandments and observes them is the one who loves me. And whoever loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him...”

If you're like me and you fall often in battle just remember another very important commandment of Jesus is to confess our sins.

Like all the Sacraments, Confession is another encounter with the risen Lord and with it comes an additional outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

These are the ways in which we sanctify Christ as Lord in our hearts and are assured of his love for us and consequently more fully live out our Christian vocation as soldiers of Christ.

We are in constant need of examining our lives so that we can know our weaknesses and limitations.

So let's be vigilant in inviting the Holy Spirit into that daily examination of self so that He, whom the world does not accept, will show us how we are really living out our Christian vocation as soldiers of Christ and if necessary where we must change?